



MICHIGAN
FOREST
PRODUCTS
COUNCIL

Comments to MI House Transportation and Infrastructure

November 29, 2016

Chairman Glardon and Members of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee:

On behalf of the Michigan Forest Products Council (MFPC), we urge you to support SB 706, 707, and 708.

Counties and Townships shouldn't be able to single out our industry for permits to use public roads. County road commissions have no independent authority to require that haul route permits be obtained before trucks carrying forest products may operate on county roads so long as the trucks are otherwise in compliance with the Michigan Vehicle Code.

We need to better define a driveway because this provision is being used in far too many circumstances to generate revenue for county road commissions. We are merely emphasizing what is already in the Motor Vehicle Code, that The Driveway Act shall not apply to driveways in existence prior to August 6, 1969, except that if the use of the land served by the driveway is changed or expanded, and the change or expansion causes the existing driveway to be a safety hazard, the driveway shall be considered a new driveway subject to this act.

We stand ready to work with you as this process furthers in an effort to craft comprehensive transportation policies that will advance Michigan's goals of reliable, affordable, and safe roads that will help to bring much needed investments and jobs to the state particularly in the rural areas.

The total economic benefit of Michigan's forest products industry in 2014 was \$20.4 billion. Michigan has 20.4 million acres of forest land, including 2.5 million acres of federal National

Forests, 4 million acres of state forests and 312,000 private landowners. Additionally, Michigan's value added exports reached \$505 million in 2014.

The Michigan Forest Products Council works to promote, protect and sustain a vibrant forest products industry in Michigan. The Michigan Forest Products Council is a statewide trade organization representing the forest products industry, which owns millions of acres of timberland and employs 96,000 men and women in Michigan.

Thank you for your consideration of our issues.